

What Manner of MEN
THE
CLERGY
OF THE
CHURCH of ENGLAND,
AND THEIR
Creatures, Are,
Briefly and fairly shown, in a
LETTER
TO
One of the late Answerers
TO A
LETTER to a DISSENTER:
Occasioned by a *Postscript* to the said Answer.

The POSTSCRIPT is this:

If the Gentleman be not satisfied with thus much, but is resolved to continue his false Charges, he shall have enough in my next to let the World know, what Manner of Men our Clergie and their Creatures are.

LONDON: Printed for T. Jones. 1687.

*Ex dono Am
Dr Hollings
worth.*

THE
CLERGY

OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND,

AND THEIR
CRESTED

LETTER

TO THE
LORDS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND SEVENTY

AND SEVEN

AND IN THE SEVENTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN MARY II.

PRINTED BY J. STURGEON, AT THE SIGN OF THE SHIELD, IN ST. MARTIN'S LANE, NEAR ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH.

A N
Advertisement
TO THE
R E A D E R.

THE Author of this Letter is so far from being agrieved at any *Ease* his Majesties Subjects do or shall enjoy, that he professes himself an hearty Lover of all good, quiet, and peaceable Dissenters, under any Denomination, throughout the three Kingdoms; but yet he thought it his Duty to expose so villanous a Threat and Insinuation, wherein the Religion and Honour of so many Honourable, Reverend, and Worshipful Persons, adorned with Piety, Learning, and all other worthy Accomplishments, are concerned.

S I R,

SIR,

Looking over your Answer to *A Letter to a Dissenter*, I found at the bottom thereof, a Post-script threatening, upon a fresh provocation, a Description of the Clergy of the Church of *England*, and their Creatures, as you are pleased to call the greatest and best Men of the Kingdom, by way of scorn and derision; by which few words you seem to intimate, as if you had a store of such just Accusations to bring forth against them, as would for ever lay their Religion and Loyalty, and consequently their Honour and Reputation, and whatsoever is praise-worthy in them, in the Dust. Which Insinuation, considering my personal knowledge of so great a number of them, both as to their Learning and Piety, did very much affect me, and put me upon a Resolution to be before-hand with you, and to give such an Account of them, as all disinterested and unprejudiced men will certainly conclude in, it being grounded upon nothing but their professed Principles, and Actions correspondent to those Principles.

But before I undertake this, I must beg leave to say thus much to you, that I am very sorry that what is wanting in clear Argument and solid Reason, to defend and make good your present Cause, you should be so far lost to true Religion, as to make it up by Slander and Detraction; which you must needs do, if you attempt to describe the strict Adherers to our Church, as any other ways than Honest and Loyal. Sir, this is not the Apostolical and Primitive way of dealing; and a good Christian would sooner let his Cause alone to maintain it self by its own goodness, than he would

would propagate it by Lyes and Falshoods, by exposing whole Bodies of men by unjust and groundless Reflections. But this hath always been the way of his Agents, who is the Father of Lyes, and who never got any ground in this World, but by Tricks and Devices. What, Sir, is your Cause so weak, and have the Arguments of these Clergy-men you now threaten, so baffled and routed you, that you must needs recurre to the worst of Refuges? God deliver me from any Undertaking that hath so much the nature of a Diabolical temper, and is so very far distant from the Spirit of the holy Jesus, whose daily practice was a confutation of so pernicious and vile a frame of Mind.

And now, Sir, to make good what I by this Letter designe, I will endeavour to give you an Account of the Clergy and their Creatures, and thereby shew you, with more truth than you I am sure can do, what *Manner of Men* they are.

And first of the Clergy, and after of their Creatures, by whom, by the way, we can possibly understand no other sort of men, but the far greatest part of the Nobility, Gentry, and most substantial Commons of the Kingdom, amongst whom are many of his Majesties most Hon^{ble} Privy Council, together with many prime Officers of State at *White-hall*, and chief Leaders in the Army; who all must fall under the contemptible name of the Clergies Creatures, when such men as you have a mind to expose the Church of *England* to scorn: and truly, Sir, I think you are very daring, and, I am sure, wanting of good Manners, to threaten so great a number of such men, and to insinuate as if they were the vilest Wretches and Scoundrels in the Government: for in short, your way of Writing, if it be taken according to the common acceptation of the words, (namely, what manner of men) is nothing else but such a sly representation of them; and therefore I will endeavour to do both of these Ranks of men right, according to my Duty

to God, and the King, who is pleased to trust these your Creatures in the greatest Affairs of the Kingdom.

I. As to the Clergy, who are at present the greatest Thorns in your side, who have by their late Writing hunted you out of all your holes and corners, who have set the things in indifference betwixt you and them, in the clearest light, who have brought Religion to its ancient and Primitive Standard, and by the most undeniable Testimonies out of the Fathers, have discovered all your Innovations, which I suppose is the true reason of your present Rancour against them: As to them, I say, we will consider them in their several Capacities, and then challenge you (barring personal Recriminations, which, if admitted, will expose all the Bodies of men in the World) to make good your promised Province.

1. Take them as men professing the Doctrines of Christianity, and here you will find them true Followers of the Scriptures and the first Ages of the Church. They believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith, which our Saviour and his Apostles thought good to make the Conditions of Communion here, and Happiness hereafter; and ever since the Reformation these have been the things they have earnestly contended for, and upon which they have spent their greatest Zeal and Fervour: witness most of the Books that have been written by them, against the *Romish* Church; They have never parted from that Church, but where she has left the Scriptures, and made Additions of her own, without any Authority from him who had the sole power to give it, I mean the holy Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, and who by himself and his Apostles, declared the whole Counsel of God, so far as it was necessary for those ends for which he came into the World. I might enlarge upon this Head, but I design a short Letter, and therefore refer the Reader to those Books so lately written by some of our Divines upon this subject.

2. Take

2. Take them as men subjected to Ecclesiastical Discipline and Government, and they do profess and have made it out from the most Authentick Authors, and are still ready so to do, whenever called to it, that their Constitution is very Apostolical and Primitive. Their Spiritual Governours are Bishops rightly ordained, and who can derive their Succession (in spite of the Nags-head Fable) as well, nay (upon the Supposition of the Necessity of the Intention of the Bishop, with many other things that are necessary to a true Ordination in the *Romish* Church) better than those of the Church of *Rome* cando. They pray to God, and perform all their publick Offices by well-digested Prayers that are made to God through Jesus Christ, as the only and immediate Object of them, not taking in the Intercession of Saints and Angels, and thereby robbing God of his Glory, which he hath positively said, he will not give to another: And as for their Cerémonies, though they use them, yet it is without Superstition, without placing any Vertue in them; and though they have defended the use of them, beyond any Contradiction that is rational and weighty, yet for the good of the whole, the Church has a power, and she hath so decreed, to alter them, or wholly to remove them; and her Children stand ready to submit to any such Alteration made by a just and lawful Authority.

3. Take them as to their Learning and the improvements of their Education, and truly considering so great a number, I do not think that there are so many conversant in all sorts of Learning in any one Nation of the Christian World; and I do believe that there are more men in one particular City of this Kingdom of that *Order*, that have run through all Arts and Sciences, and have weighed most Authors with that exactness, and to that improvement and perfection, than there are in any one place in the World, I will not except *Rome* it self, taking into their number the whole Conclave of Cardinals too. If an extraordinary skill in the Oriental

Tongues, if an exact Acquaintance with all the Fathers and Councils, if a thorough reading almost of all sorts of History, together with all other Pieces of useful knowledge that go to the making a man a very learned man, be signs and proofs of such a one, why then we can shew them many such : And, Sir, when you send forth your Description of a Church of *England* Clergy-man, pray contradict this if you can ; though I believe when you undertake this Task, your late experience of their acquaintance with the best of Books, will command you to let this drop.

4. Take them as men actually exercising their Functions, and more especially as to the Preaching part, surely he must have a forehead well steeled, that will undertake against them upon this account ; it would be a pleasant description, to hear men abused for discouraging the great things of Faith with the most pertinent Scriptures, with the most solid Reasons, with the most apt and proper words, with the most decent and becoming Insinuations, and with the most grave Gestures, free from all manner of antickness and lightness ; and yet this he must do, who will venture to expose our Clergy, as to a main part of their Body, upon this account ; and even our Enemies themselves, when they have no design to carry on, but speak their minds impartially, are forced to confess, that the Preachers of the Church of *England* are the best in the whole World.

5. Take them as Members of the Civil Government, and truly here you cannot find that Envy it self can justly pick any hole in their Coats. They have stated the Notion of Obedience just as Christ and his Apostles did, and will not suffer themselves to be drawn from their subjection to their natural Prince, according to the Laws of their Country, either by Flattery or Force ; and even in the worst of times, when they have been threatned at the severest rate, and bespattered with the most odious Aspersions,

ons, yet they have kept their standing, and their Governours have experienced the good effects of their resolute adherence to their Duty; which no Votes nor Ordinances of a great Representative could drive them from. And he that shall say, a true and steady Member of the Church of *England* did either preach up or pray for the Exclusion of his lawful Prince, he speaks a Paradox, and it is impossible, so long as the man is governed by the Principles of our Church: But if some men have been Knaves, and for sinister ends have turned their backs upon the constantly professed Doctrines of the Church of *England*, let him plead for a Knave, that hath a list to it, he is no subject of my defence at this time, neither is the Church accountable for such a mans miscarriage: and if the Church of *Rome*, or any other Number or Body of men professing Christianity, must be valued only according to some particular mens carriage and behaviour, instead of Churches, they might more properly be called Styes fit for nothing but Swine to herd in. And thus, Sir, I have honestly and with a designed brevity shewn you, what manner of men our Clergy are; and now, Sir, implead me in any of these particulars, if you can, and when you come, according to your Threat, to render and expose the Clergy, pray do it like a Gentleman and a Scholar that has conversed with the History of the last fifty years, like a man that would convince the World by real Truths, and not by little Stories raked out of Sinks and Dunghills, raised by Prejudice and Design, and propagated on purpose to serve a Turn.

I have now done as to the Clergy: Pray, Sir, give me leave to proceed a little in the defence of their Creatures, the other number of men, your Postscript threatens; which can possibly be no other, as I said before, than the Nobility, Gentry, and the substantial Commons, who do firmly adhere to the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of *England*.

Pray,

Pray, Sir, be free, and tell me, what have these Creatures, as you are pleas'd scornfully to call them, done to deserve any bad Character from your self? Did they cabal with the *Scots* in King *Charles* the first his Reign, in order to raise a Rebellion against their Natural Prince? Did they afterwards vote a War, and in pursuance of that raise an Army on purpose to divest their Prince of all his Regalia's, of all the essential Rights of an Hereditary Monarch? Did they commissionate a General to fight against him, without excepting in that Commission his own Person from the fury of a Sword or Bullet? Did they afterwards basely Imprison him, reproachfully Expose him, and then barbarously Murder him? Did they after this banish his Children out of their own Kingdoms and Possessions, loading them with the vilest Indignities in all their licentious Scripts and scurrilous Pamphlets, and at last did they endeavour what in them lay to obstruct and prevent their Restoration? Pray, Sir, be free with me, and tell me whether these Creatures of yours had any hand in any of these horrid and unheard-of things? No, no, Sir, lay your hand upon your heart, and speak like an honest man, do not think to blind our Eyes at Noon-day, and persuade us to misbelieve what our Eyes have seen and read; we are not yet so affrighted, as tamely to suffer such things to be insinuated, especially when the actions of our own and our Fathers daies do bear such an undeniable Testimony against you.

To be plain with you, Sir, these Creatures of yours have stuck to the Crown in all its Difficulties, to the venturing both of their Estates and Lives; and there has been nothing wanting, all things rightly considered, on these mens sides, at all times, and upon all occasions, to evidence their Loyalty and Duty to their Prince. And to put you in mind, that Persecution does not only belong to the Church of *England*, as you and others would fain make the World

at this time believe, these very Creatures, whom you tell us you intend to shew *What Manner of Men* they are, they were purely (and which you must needs know, if you have read any part of the late Histories) for their keeping close to the Interest and Preservation of the Crown, in vast numbers imprisoned, banished, their Estates confiscated, or at least (which God knows too many of their Families, by sad experience, now feel) irrecoverably weakened by Sequestrations and Decimations; yea, and many of them inhumanely butchered by Mock and Illegal High Courts of Justice, and consequently their Wives and Children, though many of them bred up in the greatest Plenty, and under the Wings of Right Honourable and Worshipful Parents, exposed to such Hardships, as would make any mans Heart, that hath the least tenderness or resentment left in it, ake to hear. And what these Creatures of yours, that are steady and resolved Church of *England* men (for as for Neuters or false Brethren, I am no Advocate in this Paper for them, nor am I in the least concerned, when the Bill of Exclusion, or *Monmouth's* Rebellion, are laid, upon these mens account, at the Door of the Church of *England*, for 'tis as silly, as 'tis false and spiteful;) I say, what the true and steady Church of *England* men have done ever since, in order to support the Monarchy of this Nation, I leave any man to judge, who will but look into the Statute-Book, and there consider what Sums of Money they have affectionately given to the Crown, when compelled to any extraordinary Expence from its Enemies either at home or abroad, and what a Generous Revenue they have, with the same Chearfulness, settled upon it; things that never were done, when men of other Principles had Interest enough to sit within the Walls of *St. Stephen's* Chappel.

But, Sir, to run out further upon this Subject, would be but to paint the Sun-beams, and to make that out, which
is

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is as clear as Noon-day. And therefore having in so short a Letter told you what Manner of Men the Clergy and their Creatures are, and I am sure with more truth than you can say any thing to the contrary, I wish you much joy of your designed Undertaking, and do take my leave of you, by letting you know, that nothing but Rudeness, Malice, and Ingratitude, can ever attempt at this time of the day, to expose the Clergy, together with the Nobility, Gentry, and Commons of the Kingdom, whom you are pleased to call their Creatures.

Sir, farewel, and keep your Threats to your self: for I know none of the Clergy or their Creatures, that either fear or value you. I am

Your Humble Servant.

SIR,

If you would be more fully informed what the Clergy and their Creatures are, pray read the Histories that give an Account of this Nations Affairs, from 1641, to the late King's blessed Restoration.

F I N I S.

